



## Trauma Exposure, PTSD and Violence 1

### Written Video Transcript

[00:02.20.00] Good afternoon. My name is Dr. Rob Wilson [00:02.40.00] and I'd like to welcome you to today's program. I'm the education service representative for the Employee Education System attached to the Network 21 office in the San Francisco area. And as such I've had the opportunity to work with the National Center for PTSD in Menlo Park on a number of their programs. Today's presentation is [00:03.00.00] another of those programs but it's very special in a number of ways. I'm sure that most of you have heard of the Employee Education System's new satellite network system whereby we are able to digitally broadcast a presentation such as this from the local level to VAs nationwide. This program is particularly [00:03.20.00] special because it is part of the first curriculum or series of courses developed at the local level and taken to the national level to be rebroadcast across the nation. Today's program is the second in that series. And to give you more information about today's program and about the series of programs is the developer of that [00:03.40.00] series, Dr. Pamela (Swails) from the National Center. (Dr. Swails).

[applause]

Thank you and welcome. The National Center for PTSD believes that improving the recognition, referral and quality of care for our veterans with PTSD is an important goal. As you may know, [00:04.00.00] PTSD is highly co-morbid with many psychological, behavioral and medical problems and in many cases making for a most complex presentation. To that end, we've designed a series of courses to help healthcare providers better understand and treat their patients. We aim to provide relevant, [00:04.20.00] current and pragmatic information that should assist you in your efforts in dealing with our veteran population. Today's presentation and ones to follow have been in the planning stages for more than a year and a half and are a partial response to the many requests we receive [00:04.40.00] for training. Today we're very fortunate to have with us Dr. David Foy who has an extremely long and distinguished career in trauma work. To name but a few highlights, Dr. Foy has 25 years of federal service with five being in the military [00:05.00.00] and some of that time spent in Vietnam. He also has 20 years in the VA system including some time as chief of psychology at the Jackson, Mississippi VA. Dr. Foy is a pioneer in PTSD research and a leader in education and training [00:05.20.00] of professionals in trauma research. Currently, he leads two training labs with pre- and post-doc students at Pepperdine University and at Fuller Theological Seminary. He's also of late a primary investigator in a national cooperative study [00:05.40.00] for group therapy for war zone stress and trauma. He's currently mentoring two of our divisions of the National Center, Hawaii and Menlo Park, Palo Alto. In sum, he has a long career in trauma research and a long history with the National



Center. [00:06.00.00] We welcome him here today and I'm very pleased now to introduce Dr. David Foy.

[applause]

Thank you Dr. (Swails) and Dr. Wilson. I'm glad to be here this afternoon. Thank you all for coming. And [00:06.20.00] what I want to do is to share with you some of the research. First classical research examining linkages between early childhood violence in the home and later violent outcomes in adolescent and adulthood because there are [00:06.40.00] quite a number of very expensive 30 to 40 year longitudinal studies that we taxpayers have paid a lot of money to learn from linkages, if they're there, between early childhood events of particular types and later outcomes [00:07.00.00] that concern us both as individuals and as a society. Because we need to know, if it's possible to know, what the predictors are of adolescent and adult violent behavior. One of the perplexing questions [00:07.20.00] about that relationship, if in fact I convince you or the data does that there is a linkage between early childhood trauma exposure and later risk for violent behavior, is what relationship do mental health problems have in that linkage between [00:07.40.00] early childhood trauma and later violent behavior? So, that's why we have titled the lecture the way that we have to examine first the relationship in the studies, the classic studies, [00:08.00.00] to establish whether there is empirical support for a cycle of violence perspective and then secondly, to examine the research studies that have been done, the classic studies but also those that have been done in my lab over the last ten years down in Los Angeles, primarily [00:08.20.00] with juvenile offenders and at-risk adolescents in the Los Angeles area. Thirdly, I would like us to examine what I think are the central findings in those studies out of the lab in Los Angeles as well as several selected studies. [00:08.40.00] I selected recent studies that have been published in the last two years on these same relationships in current populations of war-exposed veterans. So that in essence what we're going to do is we're going to look at the classic studies first, then we're going to look at studies done with juvenile offenders and at-risk [00:09.00.00] adolescents in my lab in Los Angeles and then we're going to look at recent studies that have been done with the population that many of you work with, that is chronic combat-related PTSD veterans. And then we'll see if there are findings from the sets of studies that we'll be looking at [00:09.20.00] that may identify common themes that we can take and apply in our thinking about how it is that violence is engendered in individuals and what we might do with our patients to reduce risk for directly violent behaviors as well as behaviors that might be considered [00:09.40.00] risk behaviors, things that are associated with increasing risk for violent offender. So, that's what I hope to do in the next hour. What I would like you to feel free to do is if you have questions as we go, raise your hand and we'll get one of the boom mics to you so that we get your [00:10.00.00] question recorded from the get go. At the end of the second segment we'll have a short question and answer period. That's your time. You can use it or not use it, I can always use more time. So, we'll see how that goes. Then we'll have another question [00:10.20.00] and answer period after the end of segment four. Okay? So, first of all, the cycle of violence. What do we mean when we use the term cycle of violence? Well, there are a couple of ways that I'm familiar that it's used



and [00:10.40.00] you may have other thoughts on it. But let me tell you what I've heard the term and what I think it means. First of all, it could be used in an intergenerational perspective across family members where children who are abused or mistreated [00:11.00.00] or who suffer maltreatment or neglect as children then are at risk for doing some of the same abusive behaviors toward their own children when they become parents. So, that's an intergenerational perspective. [00:11.20.00] Another way of thinking about a cycle of violence would be within a more proximate developmental perspective where children who are mistreated as young children then as early as latency age or adolescence—never mind when they get to be [00:11.40.00] parents but early on in just the next developmental stage or two in their own lifespan trajectories begin to show signs of aggression and coercive behavior toward others in their family environments and their school environments and [00:12.00.00] so forth. So, those are two ways that I'm familiar with the term cycle of violence being used. Now, what I'd like to do is to actually look at these six elegant longitudinal studies that we paid a bunch of bucks for—we should get our moneys worth, right—[00:12.20.00] and see what kinds of variables have been examined as predictors in this set of studies that do show a linkage between early maltreatment and so on and then [00:12.40.00] violent behavior and aggression in early adulthood. The types of studies that we'll be talking about, first the longitudinal studies with high risk families, secondly—actually I want to do this one next. Cathy (Spatz Whitham's) [00:13.00.00] study of individuals who were well documented, had well documented cases in Indiana of abuse and neglect and then going back to the records of those same individuals and others [00:13.20.00] in the state of Indiana 20 years later to see what percentage of those who were documented cases of abuse were actually convicted or charged with violent crimes in late adolescence and adulthood. So, that'll be the second thing we'll look at. And then the third one where we'll spend quite a bit of time, because this represents [00:13.40.00] the kind of studies that we did in my lab, retrospective studies of offenders or at-risk adolescents. Okay? So, let's take a look at the classic longitudinal studies that have examined these factors in terms of their potential [00:14.00.00] for predicting violent behavior or aggressive behavior in later developmental stages, mostly in adolescence and adulthood. So, what have we got there? We've got punitiveness. And what that typically means is the use of physical discipline, being hit, [00:14.20.00] hitting, parents that use spanking or other forms of hitting in order to enforce discipline. Lack of love, this is the attachment variable. Studies that examine the quality of the relationship between the primary caregiver [00:14.40.00] and children in the home. Laxness, in our lab we talked about parental monitoring. How much do parents know about what their children are doing, who they're hanging around with, where they're going, what time they're coming back, and so on? In these studies that [00:15.00.00] variable is labeled laxness. Family disruption, this is divorce or chronic marital discord, fighting between parents in the home. And then parental deviance would be essentially criminality on the part usually of father or anti-social behavior on the part of the father [00:15.20.00] and perhaps severe mental illness on the part of the mother, okay? An example of these six studies would be the (McCord) Study. Can we go back on that one? [00:15.40.00] This study was done—if you know about the Northeast, this is—these are suburbs of Boston, Somerville, and Cambridge. And what the study did was identify poor families who were at-risk by



virtue of where they lived and the poverty that they lived in. [00:16.00.00] And what they did was study these families over the course of a 40 year period, from the time children were very small through their early adult years. Just off the bat there 73% of those families [00:16.20.00] where there was criminality in the fathers also used harsh discipline. So, the two predictors that we'll be looking at here in the next slide they're really in the case of fathers who exhibited criminal behavior often co-occur. So, it's kind of like a double whammy as you'll see here in [00:16.40.00] the next slide. The lucky few, that is those sons and families where there was neither harsh discipline being used nor criminality being modeled on the part of the father, you see that the risk there is probably not a whole lot different than it might have been [00:17.00.00] for "healthier samples". But that was a minority of the population. More often, sons came from a family where there were one or both of the major risk factors there. And you see that having one but not both is a better shape than having [00:17.20.00] both where the risk for violent behavior manifest by criminality—being charged or convicted of a crime in adolescence or adulthood—is very high for those sons in the Somerville study who come from families where their fathers give them the [00:17.40.00] double whammy here. Let's turn now to Cathy (Spatz Whitham's) study. This study was published about ten years ago. And at the time it was a very important study because it was the first study really to [00:18.00.00] use official records at two points in time in an individual's lifespan trajectory to actually examine linkages between what was happening in terms of violent parenting early on and then what happened in the course of that individual's own violent [00:18.20.00] behavior as recorded in records. This is a very conservative measure of violent behavior because much, much violent behavior occurs that's never—that individual's are never charged with. So, bear that in mind about her study. This is a very conservative study because a lot of abuse happens in families that people never get charged for [00:18.40.00] either. So, in both cases, both in terms of identifying the children who were actual official cases of abuse and neglect and in the case of identifying those who actually were convicted of a crime. These are very conservative measures. But you see what happens [00:19.00.00] here when you look at the group that were abused relative to a very well matched equivalent group for all other variables except for the abuse where the risk of engaging in violent or criminal activity almost doubles [00:19.20.00] —1.7 times more frequent in those children that came out of the documented abuse and neglect family situation.

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